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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production & Marketing Administration

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511 -513 U. S. Court House
Phone 2-1365

Fort Worth, Texas
February 7, 1946

USDA FOOD BULLETIN

"As the season advances into late winter, human vitality reserves are said to reach the lowest point in the year. Intelligent housewives recognize the importance of maintaining the vigorous health of their families and are freely utilizing fresh fruits and vegetables for this purpose," says Ralph G. Risser, Federal Food Reporter.

The consumption of wheat foods in America should be restricted for the benefit of hungry people in foreign lands. This is a good time to start. Liberal use of fruits and vegetables is a good policy under the circumstances.

It's cabbage time in Texas! And it's smart to buy a product when it's in season. This is the season for movement of the new crop of fresh green cabbage from the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Northern markets may be confronted with a choice between the old crop from storage and the new crop from Texas and Florida, but Texas markets wisely concentrate on the fresh product direct from the cabbage fields just north of the border or just west of the Gulf. The first three or four months of the year are major shipping months for Texas cabbage.

Citrus fruits are also important at this time. A delightful way to get off to a good start on a cheerful, busy day is to have a Texas grapefruit for breakfast, or a tall glass of sweet rich orange juice. Either the grapefruit or the orange is rich in vitamin C. Oranges and tangerines are also good in the fruit salad or the fruit cocktail, and they are a welcome addition to the lunch box. They lend a gay decorative color note to the fruit bowl or to the dessert centerpiece. For fruit juices, don't overlook the advantages of the smaller oranges. Aside from their "cuteness", they do have special values which have been brought to light by scientists. The juice of the smaller oranges averages better in taste or flavor, richer and sweeter with a higher content of solids as well as a greater vitamin C content. Recent receipts of Texas oranges include the Valencia variety.

Apples are not so plentiful nor so fresh from the trees as grapefruit and oranges. Some of the available supplies are crab-apple in size and some lack the bright rosy cheeks of a colorful make-up. But they do have the apple flavor and much consumer appeal just the same.

Avocados are much lower priced than they were a year ago. A good crop of this salad fruit was grown in California this season, making supplies more plentiful than last year. Avocados are prized for their high nutrition and delicate flavor. Here is a fruit that has grown rapidly in popular favor during the last ten or fifteen years and is greatly missed when not available. The winter supply comes from California and the summer fruits from Florida.

While it is still winter time consumers should be prepared for hot meals on cold days. The stew pots are not through boiling. Root crops are offered freely at moderate prices which make them best buys. Tender carrots, beets, and turnips are being brought in regularly from South Texas. Parsnips from Colorado and rutabagas from Minnesota are also on hand.

But spring is on its way and the salad course will be getting more popular than ever. It satisfies the hidden hunger of a vitamin deficient diet. It also reduces the appetite for high calorie foods which frustrate people who want to retain their boyish figures. Fine quality lettuce and celery are in good supply and tomatoes are not so scarce as they have been.

Occasional lots of winter strawberries have been on the market, but from now on more regular, but not heavy, strawberry supplies are expected. The Missionary strawberries now coming from the Rio Grande Valley are very good in size and are expected to improve in color. We haven't seen any "as large as watermelons", however. Ralph G. Risser.

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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production & Marketing Administration

511-513 U. S. Court House
Phone 2-1365

Fort Worth, Texas
February 14, 1946

USEA FOOD BULLETIN

How to keep the standard of living up and the cost of living down is sometimes a headache to Mr. and Mrs. John Q. Public. How to balance the diet, as well as the budget is a problem of general concern. The answers are to be found in a knowledge of current food supplies, needs, comparative values, and present costs. In spite of the high costs of living, the high level of American food consumption, and the progress made, there is room for further improvement in nutrition and in household economy. A little information on the fresh fruit and vegetable offerings may help.

New crop Texas cabbage is now in its heyday of production. It is popular as a staple vegetable because people like it. Its heads are good to the very core. It ranks among the top vegetables for vitamins because it contains A, B1, B2, C, and niacin. The greener the cabbage, the richer it is in vitamins. The Texas cabbage, especially the outer leaves, has the green color. The heads are not too large.

If variety is the spice of life, the present diversity of fruits and vegetables on Texas markets should lend a spicy savor to existence. Nearly three dozen fresh products are now available. Best buys this week include carrots, cabbage, celery, Irish potatoes, sweet potatoes, spinach, turnips, beets, cauliflower, grapefruit, and oranges. Onions, apples, tomatoes, and bananas have been conspicuous absentees from the lists of best buys recently because of their relative scarcity.

An ever normal refrigerator well stocked with foods has advantages over hand to mouth buying. It is especially good when the unexpected arrival of a guest might cause embarrassment. Lettuce and celery may be preserved for a quickly-made salad if there is always some kept under refrigeration. Believe it or not, California lettuce and Florida celery made a harmonious combination in a salad.

Grapefruit should be kept on the shopping list. It is said to be tops as a source of the important vitamin C not to mention its value for B1, B2, and minerals. The Texas product is quite properly the subject of more or less Texas bragging, but Texas grapefruit is popular in many out of state markets and the favorite of many consumers, both Texans and others.

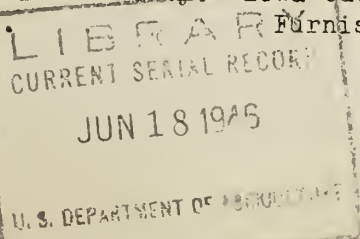
But for vitamin A, we suggest the attractive carrots, some of which are coming in from South Texas. For balancing of diets and budgets grapefruit and carrots are an excellent team.

The most serious thing in the food picture is the situation overseas. In some countries, supplies are near the starvation level. Food conservation suggestions for this country include the use of substitutes for bread. One timely suggestion is that we eat an extra potato instead of a slice of bread. A small potato is said to be about equal in food value to a slice of bread. There are plenty of good potatoes.

Home gardeners are now able to buy onion sets, onion plants, cabbage plants, and seed potatoes. As soon as the soil is in proper condition, and the weather is favorable, these things should be planted.

Despite the midweek norther, we already have harbingers of spring in the limited supplies of strawberries and of rhubarb on the markets.

One of the current oddities in produce commerce is the fact that the few available cucumbers come not only from sunny Florida, but also from the winter gripped corn belt of the North. Iowa cucumbers now selling here were grown under glass in hot houses.



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Production & Marketing Administration

511-513 U. S. Court House
Phone 2-1365

Fort Worth, Texas
February 21, 1946

USDA FOOD BULLETIN

Shoppers, window-shoppers, and mere ogles will see spectacular displays of good things to eat on the retail vegetable and fruit stands. They are part of the American scene which is in sharp contrast to the picture in less fortunate hunger-ridden cities of Europe.

There are scads of fresh vegetables and some fresh fruits on the market to choose from. With a few exceptions, these commodities are generally plentiful. However, though there's an apple for the teacher and it will take a nice polish, there may not be enough large rosy red ones for all the teachers. When apple production is short and we have to wait until next season for the usual abundance we find that it's a long time between crops. Some Canadian apples were put on the market this week and Washington Delicious apples have been released from the set aside order which may help the situation for the civilian trade.

Banana supplies are irregular and we may tire of the refrain, "Yes, we have no bananas." But when banana plantations are damaged by hurricanes and it is necessary to grow new banana trees, getting back to normal production is not a quick process. But the task is being done. Until Texas onion production gets into full swing with its crop of early Bermudas, onion supplies may be limited. But present supplies of Crystal Wax onions are coming from the fields of Mexico while the Sweet Spanish variety comes from Colorado storage stocks.

Both varieties are mild onions. So it's the market that's strong--not the onions. Yet these onions have oodles of flavor and can go a long way in adding zest to some special dish.

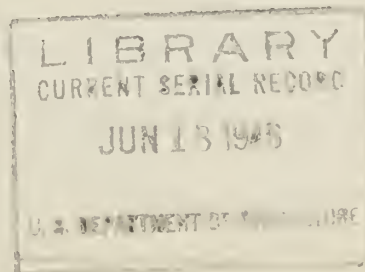
Mrs. Housewife has a much less arduous and hectic task in buying her fresh vegetables than she has had in stocking up on stockings. Bare cupboards have been much less common than bare legs. Producers and distributors of food have done a good job.

Some like it hot and some like it cold, but evidently many like it in one way or another. We refer to cabbage which is produced and consumed more extensively than any other vegetable in the United States with the single exception of potatoes. Whether you prefer it as slaw or cooked, you may be interested in the fact that it is considered a best buy. It is coming fresh from the fields of Texas.

The good supply of Irish potatoes in the Northern states is moving well from the producing districts. Many are being sold in the convenient 10-lb consumer open-meshed bags, which were not generally available during the war. There should be ample potatoes for us all with no skimpy portions. Novelty on the menu may be maintained by trying out new and varied ways featured in the cook books. The fattening effect may be avoided by skipping the rich gravies and other high calorie foods which are frequently served on potatoes.

Grapefruit is having its day. It is the outstanding best buy in the fruit list. We need to offer no apologies for it. We simply suggest that you make the most of it while it is in season.

Furnished by Ralph G. Risser, Federal Food Reporter.



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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Production & Marketing Administration

511-513 U. S. Court House
Phone 2-1365

Fort Worth, Texas
February 27, 1946

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USDA FOOD BULLETIN

Flavorsome meals that will be relished with gusto, remembered with pleasure, and referred to with enthusiasm are the ambition of many good cooks. Meals which avoid monotony and the tedium of frequent repetition are what they want. And surely there are sufficient vegetables and fruits available to make varied menus a possibility. But the production and the distribution of such foods for consumption throughout the year are conducted so efficiently that it is hard to find some product which carries a surprise. We are fed up on good things, satiated with foods which were once regarded as luxuries. The search for something different is difficult. Novelty is illusive. Yet old foods served in new ways may be the answer.

When one has given full scope to her ability to concoct new dishes and has exhausted her ingenuity and originality she can make discoveries between the covers of the cook books, on the pages of periodicals, or on the radio programs of recipes and menus. For example, if lettuce with the leaves pulled apart, chopped with other salad ingredients, or cut in shreds has become tiresome, try it in slices or cut in quarters. It is like a different product. Or substitute endive. It is less common than lettuce. If you are getting in a rut there are innumerable ways to get out. The best meals have not yet been served. The best culinary methods have not yet been tried.

If any one says that nothing ever happens on the fruit and vegetable markets, he is all wrong. It's true that many of the commodities are available over a long period and a number of the old standbys are here the year around. But in spite of all that we can do there are ups and downs in the fruit and vegetable deals.

There are a number of recent developments in the fruit and vegetable picture in this area. Sweet potatoes, a food of great popularity in the Southland, have not been offered so freely. Growers are expecting higher prices for remaining supplies in March. While there is a good supply of Irish potatoes of high quality, there have been some evidences of a stronger market sentiment. Florida celery, which has been on the bargain counter this winter, has shown a stronger tone with some upward adjustments in prices. Lettuce is mostly selling at ceiling prices again. Carrot supplies are rather more liberal and they are one of the best values. The cabbage market has been well maintained since it was advanced last week.

If you want onions, you can buy sets or plants and grow them in your garden, but for immediate use you can buy green onions. The purchase of bulk onions at satisfactory prices might not be easy.

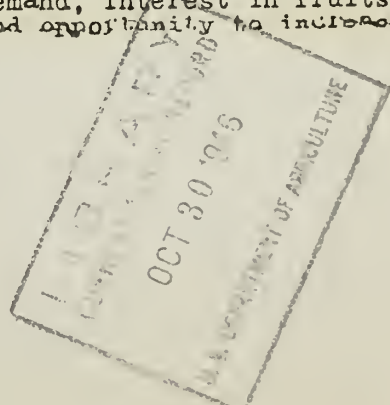
Our late winter supply of apples for eating and cooking is rather light, but a good supply of winter pears is still available. Some are in Texas and still more are on the Pacific Coast where they were grown. They are suited for salads, for desserts, and for eating out of hand. Most of them here are Anjous, which are fairly large, with tender, juicy, fine grained flesh, and smooth, thin, light green skin. They are delectable for baking.

But for those who want applesauce there is a good supply of small apples which can be easily prepared by simply cutting them in halves or quarters, cooking until rather tender, and mashing through the colander to remove skins and seeds. The result is delicious. The size of the apples doesn't matter.

Texas is especially fortunate because of the large production of truck and fruit crops within its borders at this time of the year. It has grown more cabbage and spinach for marketing during this period than any other state. Its plantings of early spring onions is larger by far than that of any other state.

Since there are prospects of higher meat prices and there are limited supplies of cereals with which to meet a heavy world demand, interest in fruits and vegetables is keener than ever. There is reason and opportunity to increase the vegetable and fruit portion of the diet.

Furnished by Ralph G. Bisser,
Federal Food Reporter



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